

For Immediate Release
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(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Albio Sires voted once again to fund our soldiers in Iraq while insuring the Iraqi government shares the responsibility of stabilizing their country. H.R. 2206, U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act of 2007, fully funds our troops over the next two to three months. This proposal splits the bill, previously vetoed by the President, into two separate measures.

"We must send a message to the American people that we are keeping our promises and voting for a new direction in Iraq," said Congressman Sires. "Our troops need our protection and support, but they also need to know that there will be an end to their involvement in combat. We owe it to our soldiers to show them that our government is on the right track with its sights set on our men and women coming home to their families."

H.R. 2206 withholds \$52.8 billion of the \$95.5 billion provided to the Department of Defense. It requires that the President submit a report to Congress, on or before July 13th, about the progress being made by the Iraqi government. Advances are essential regarding the enforcement of vital security measures and enhancement of government procedures, as well as the protection of the civil liberties and rights of all Iraqis. It also requests that the Iraqi government begin the allocation of the \$10 billion of Iraqi revenue that has been set aside for reconstruction projects and essential services.

After receiving the reports, both the House and the Senate would then vote on the release of the remaining funds. In addition, the bill also guarantees a vote on an amendment that directs the funding to only be used for planning and executing the redeployment of U.S. troops from Iraq within 180 days of the bill's enactment, with only limited exceptions to this redeployment.

This bill also includes vital funding for international assistance, veterans' medical care, Hurricane Katrina Relief, and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Funding for these important programs was included in the previous supplemental appropriations bill which was vetoed by the President.

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